



**EAT AND GO** People drove and parked at their favorite drive-in diners during the 1950s.

# Zoom!

ONE HUNDRED YEARS AGO,  
AMERICA HIT THE ROAD  
WITH THE MODEL T



**T**he "Tin Lizzie" put America—and the world—on wheels.

A century ago, most Americans did not own cars. Cars were popular only among wealthy people, who could afford them and pay to fix them when they broke down. All that changed in October 1908 when the Ford Motor Company rolled out the Model T, often called by its nickname, "Tin Lizzie."

## Words to Know

**landscape:** (land-scape) *noun*.  
A large area of land that you can view from one place.

**revolutionary:** (rev-uh-loo-shuhn-air-ee) *adjective*.  
Relating to large, important change.

The Model T changed the **landscape** of America. Model Ts were affordable,

durable, and easy to repair. These qualities made Model Ts popular among everyday Americans, who bought them in great numbers. Life in America changed as a result.

## The Common Car

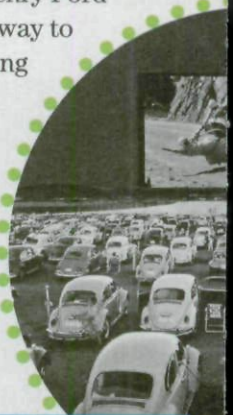
The Model T "was kind of the common car for the common person," said John Heitmann, a history professor at the University of Dayton in Ohio.

Before the Model T, most Americans traveled by horse-and-carriage. Roads were covered in dirt, not asphalt. It could take days, even weeks, to get from one place to another. The Model T increased the popularity of cars. Driving allowed people and businesses to spread out. Highways were built where there

were once dirt roads. Eventually, drive-in restaurants were built, as well as malls.

How Ford built the Model T also was **revolutionary**.

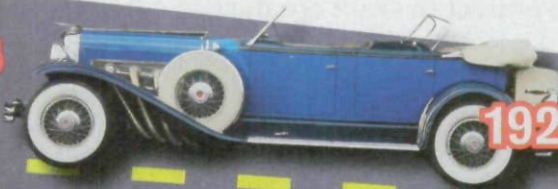
Before the Model T, cars were very expensive because each was built one at a time. This took a lot of effort, so automakers charged a lot of money for cars. Ford Motor Company founder Henry Ford came up with a new way to build cars—the moving assembly line. Ford workers could make more than one Model T at a time. Because of this, the company was able to sell Model Ts at a price that middle-class Ameri-



**WATCH AND RIDE** Cars became portable theater seats at drive-in movie theaters, like this one during the 1960s.

## Through the Years

Cars of the past 100 years. Today's cars include more fuel-efficient models like the Toyota Prius. Look for more spacecraft-like designs and increased gas mileage in the future.



**1929 DUESENBERG**



**1959 CADILLAC**



**1963 VOLKSWAGEN**



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